

The Holy Father's Encyclical on St. Thomas

To the Venerable Brethren, Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops and Other Ordinaries of Places Having Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See, Health and Apostolic Benediction.

Venerable Brethren:

HAVING already confirmed by Apostolic Letter what was established by Canon Law, We showed that St. Thomas Aquinas should be held as the principal guide of studies. Now, on approaching the day on which six hundred years are completed since he was enrolled in the number of the Saints, We find a happy occasion of inculcating the same thing in the souls under Our guidance, and to declare it in a manner so that they shall be enabled to profit in the school of so great a Master; because true science and piety, which is the companion of all the virtues, are wonderfully united in his teachings. And God Himself Who is Truth and Goodness certainly will not be able to obtain His glory and the salvation of souls—the principal and proper scope of the Church,—unless the sacred ministers are well instructed in the knowledge of these things, and abundantly furnished with virtues.

DOCTRINE WITH PIETY

Now this union of doctrine with piety, of erudition with virtue, of truth with charity was truly conspicuous in the Angelic Doctor, to whom may be attributed the characteristic of the sun, because, while he brought to minds the light of science, there burned in his will the fire of virtue. And it seemed that God, the Source of all sanctity and wisdom, wished to show in Thomas how these two things aid one another, how the exercise of virtue helps to the contemplation of truth, and the clear meditation of truth renders virtue more pure and perfect. Because he who lives with integrity and purity, and through virtue holds

*Translation made by Boston "Pilot," with alterations from original Latin text.

the rein over his passions, since he is thus free from a grave impediment, will be able more readily to elevate his spirit and better to fix it upon the profound secrets of the Divinity according to the words of the same St. Thomas: "Life is greater than doctrine, because life conduces to the science of truth, and if a man shall have placed all his zeal in knowing the things that are above nature, through this very circumstance he shall feel himself not a little incited to perfect living, nor will such a science, whose beauty charms and attracts to itself, ever be called arid or inert, but active in a supreme measure."

These are the teachings that this centenary solemnity furnishes to you, Venerable Brethren, but, in order to render them more manifest, We have thought it Our duty to treat briefly of the sanctity and doctrine of Thomas Aquinas, and to demonstrate to you what great advantages the priestly order, especially the young clergy, and the entire Christian people may draw from such an argument.

POSSESSED OF MORAL VIRTUES

All the moral virtues were possessed by St. Thomas in the highest degree, and in such a manner associated that, as he himself desired, they formed the bond of charity which "gives form to all the acts of virtue." If afterward we seek for the peculiar and particular characteristics of this sanctity, first of all, we discover that virtue whereby Thomas seemed to resemble the Angelic nature, chastity, which rendered him worthy of being joined to the ranks of the Angels by a mystical girding, he having conserved this virtue intact in most perilous essays.

To a chastity so exquisite he added the alienation from the goods of earth and the contempt of honors, and we know how he overcame, with the highest constancy, the obstinacy of his parents who desired him to engage in a comfortable profession according to the spirit of the age, and how, afterward, when the sacred mitre was offered to him by the Supreme Pontiff he entreated him not to impose that weight upon him, a weight which was formidable to him.

But the principal distinction of the sanctity of Thomas is that which is called by St. Paul the "word of wisdom," that union of a double wisdom, acquired and infused, as it is called, with which nothing accords better than humility, love of prayer, and charity toward God.

In regard to humility which St. Thomas placed as the foundation of all other virtues, it was manifested by his position in the actions of daily life and, in obedience such as he showed towards a lay brother, it is no less revealed, than by the text of his writings which breathe all reverence toward the Fathers of the Church. And, as he held in highest veneration the ancient Doctors, so it seemed as if he inherited the intelligence of all.

A DOCILE TEACHER

The same point is well illustrated by his having employed for the triumph of truth all the forces of his great genius without seeking any glory for himself. And so, while his philosophies serve to heighten his own fame, he studied in teaching his doctrine to obscure himself, and yet, nevertheless, he radiated from himself the Light of Divine Truth. This humility, however, united to the cleanness of heart of which We have spoken, and to a great assiduity in holy prayer, rendered the soul of Thomas as docile and tender to receive as to follow the impulses and the illuminations of the Holy Spirit, in which the substance of contemplation consists.

To obtain these from on high, he was accustomed frequently to abstain from all food, to pass entire nights in continued prayer, and, from time to time, with the impetuosity of an ingenious piety, to apply his head to the Tabernacle of the August Sacrament and to turn his eyes and his spirit to the image of Jesus Crucified, which was the greatest book from which he learned all that he knew, as he himself confessed to his friend, St. Bonaventure. So that one may say of St. Thomas the same thing that he himself said of his Holy Father and Legislator, Dominic, that he did not speak unless of God and with God.

And, since he was accustomed to contemplate all things in God as the First Cause and Final End of all things, it is so much more easy to follow in the teachings of his *Summa Theologica*, as in his life, the one and the other wisdom which he himself thus defined: "Through the wisdom which is acquired by human study, right judgment concerning Divine things is obtained according to the perfect use of reason. But there is another wisdom which descends from on high and which judges of Divine things by a natural quality. And this is a gift of the Holy Spirit whereby man becomes perfect in Divine things and not only understands them, but experiences them in himself."

WISDOM AND CHARITY

Accompanied by the other Gifts of the Holy Spirit, this wisdom derived from God by infusion in Thomas was continually and equally increased in charity, the lady and queen of all the virtues. Because in him the doctrine was most certain that the love of God ought always to increase in us from the very form of the precept: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart," because "whole" and "perfect" are the same thing. The end of the precept is charity as the Apostle teaches it.

Now, no measure is placed in this end, but only in the things which assist toward this end. This is the reason why the perfection of charity falls under a precept, because it is the end to which all ought to tend according to their condition. And, as the proper effect of charity is that man tend toward God, uniting his affections to Him, naturally, since he lives no more to himself, he lives to God Himself. We see how, in Thomas, the Divine love, together with a double wisdom, was augmented without ceasing, even to producing in him perfect forgetfulness of himself, to the point that, Jesus Christ, addressed him thus: "Thou hast written well of Me, Thomas," and furthermore asking: "What recompense do you ask from Me for your labors?" he responded: "Nothing save Thyself, Lord!"

So, incited by charity, he did not cease to serve the

needs of others most eagerly, writing excellent books, despoiling himself of his garments for the succoring of the poor, and he even restored health to the sick as when, in the Vatican Basilica, where he preached during the Paschal solemnity, he liberated a woman who touched the lappet of his garment, from an inveterate issue of blood.

In what other Doctor as in the Angelic is this "word of wisdom" which is lauded by St. Paul more conspicuous? Who, in teaching, instructed not alone the minds of men, but with all zeal incited their wills to the love of God, the end of all things?

"The love of God," he affirms, in sublime words, "is that which infuses and creates goodness in things," and, in treating of the various mysteries, one by one, he does not cease to illustrate this diffusion of the Divine Goodness. "It pertains," he says, "to the nature of the highest Good that it communicate Itself in the highest manner, and this was effected by God principally through the Incarnation."

Nothing more clearly demonstrates the power, no less of his genius than of his charity, than the Office of the August Sacrament which he composed, and that love which he cherished during his whole lifetime for this Sacrament, he declared in the words which he spoke when, dying, he received the Holy Viaticum: "I receive Thee, the Price of the redemption of my soul, for love of Whom I studied, watched and labored."

COMMENDATION OF PONTIFFS

From this brief sketch of the great virtues of Thomas, the excellence of his doctrine, which holds an admirable authority and value in the Church, will be more readily understood. Our Predecessors exalted it at all times with unanimous praises. Alexander IV did not hesitate to write to him thus: "To Our Beloved Son, Thomas Aquinas, a man conspicuous by nobility of birth and integrity of habit and who, by the grace of God, has acquired a treasure of science and doctrine."

And after his death, John XXII seemed to wish to approve not only his virtues, but even his doctrine, when, addressing the Cardinals in Consistory, he pronounced that memorable sentence: "He illumined the Church more than all the other Doctors; in his books a man profits more in one year than if he should follow during the whole course of his life the teachings of others." Wherefore, the fame of his intelligence and science brought it about that Pius V enrolled him in the number of holy Doctors and confirmed his title of Angelic.

As to the rest, what act more clearly demonstrates the esteem that the Church has always had for so great a Doctor than the exposition on the altar by the Tridentine Fathers of but two volumes, the Sacred Scriptures and the Summa Theologica, in order that they might be inspired by them during their deliberations? And, although We shall not relate the series of unnumbered documents of the Apostolic See on this argument, the happy memory is always alive within Us of the reflowering of the doctrine of Aquinas through the authority and at the instance of Leo XIII, and such is the merit of Our illustrious Predecessor, as We have said on other occasions, that this fact alone would be sufficient to give him immortal glory, had he not also established other most wise measures.

Following in the footsteps of Leo, Pius X of venerated memory, especially in his "Motu Proprio" on the Angelic Doctor records this beautiful sentence: "After the death of the holy Doctor, no Council was held in the Church at which he was not present in his precious doctrine." And, nearer to Us, Benedict XV, Our lamented Predecessor, more than once showed the same complacency, and to him belonged the glory of promulgating the Code of Canon Law which consecrated "the methods, the doctrines and principles" of the Angelic Doctor (Canon 1366).

UNIVERSAL DOCTOR

We, while re-echoing this chorus of praise given to that sublime genius, approve that he not only be called Angelic, but even that he be given the title of

Universal Doctor, since the Church has made his doctrine her own, as is attested by so many documents. And, since it would take too long to expose here all the reasons brought forward by Our Predecessors regarding this argument, it will suffice that We demonstrate that Thomas wrote, inspired by the supernatural spirit by which he lived, and that his writings, especially where they teach the rules and principles of sacred sciences, are judged to be of universal nature.

In treating of Divine things in his teachings and writings, he established in theology a most luminous example of the very ultimate relation which ought to exist between the studies and the sentiments of the soul. And, as one cannot say that he has exact knowledge of a distant country who does not know even the most minute detail of it, if he has not lived there some time, so no one can acquire an exact knowledge of God through diligent scientific research alone, but he must also be in perfect union with God. To this point all the theology of St. Thomas tends, to conduct men toward living an intimate life with God. And, as when a child at Montecassino, he did not tire of asking: "Who is God?" so his books, composed on the creation of the world, on man, on virtues, laws, the Sacraments, all treat of God as the Author of our eternal salvation.

LABOR AND PIETY INDISPENSABLE

In disputing about the causes which render studies sterile such as curiosity, immoderate desire of knowledge, the inactivity of genius, he found no other remedy for such impediments save a great alacrity in labor, an alacrity invigorated by the ardor of piety and derived from the life of the soul.

When, therefore, sacred studies are directed by a triple light, right reason, infused faith and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, they perfect the intelligence. No one more than Thomas possessed this light in abundance, because, after having employed in arduous debate all the forces of his genius, he implored from God the interpretation of the difficulty by fasting and most humble prayer.

And God was accustomed to hear him with so great benignity that He sent even the Princes of the Apostles to instruct him. Nor can it be wondered at if, at the end of his life, he attained such a high degree of contemplation that the things written by him, as he himself said, seemed no more than chaff because he had now fixed his thought in the Eternal Truth and he awaited nothing more save to see God. This, as Thomas himself teaches, is the fruit which ought principally to be derived from studies: a great love of God and a great desire of eternal things.

But, while by his example he taught how we ought to comport ourselves in studies of various nature, he also furnishes firm and stable precepts for each branch of study. Who better than he unfolded the nature and sense of philosophy, its various parts and the importance of each? With what great perspicuity he demonstrated the convenience and accord of the various components which constitute the body of such science.

"It is the function of wisdom," he says, "to dispose. And this is because wisdom is the perfection of reason whose property it is to distinguish order. For, although the instinct recognizes certain things as absolute, nevertheless it belongs to intellect or reason to distinguish one thing from the other and dispose in orderly fashion.

"So, according to the diverse orders considered by reason, are diverse sciences. The order which the intellect through reasoning produces, pertains to rational philosophy or logic, which properly considers the co-ordination of rational speech, likewise of principles, and conclusions.

"To natural philosophy or physics appertains the consideration of the order of things which human reason considers but does not produce, so in natural philosophy we comprehend also metaphysics. The order of voluntary actions comes to be considered by moral philosophy which is divided into three parts: the first which considers the operations of the individual in view of the end and which is called Monastic; the

second which considers the domestic operations and is called Economics; the third considers the operations of the civil multitude and is called Politics."

All this St. Thomas treated diligently, each in its proper method, commencing with those which are most strictly joined to human reason and by degrees ascending to the most remote, even to the sphere where they come to a stop at the supreme vertex of all things.

The most solid doctrine of Thomas regarded the power of human intelligence. "Our intellect naturally knows being and the things which appertain to being as such, and on this knowledge is founded the knowledge and recognition of first principles."

This doctrine destroys even from its roots the errors and opinions of those recent philosophers who deny in the intellect the perception of being, leaving to it only that of suggestive impressions, errors from which follows the agnosticism so vigorously condemned by the Encyclical *Pascendi*.

The arguments with which St. Thomas demonstrated the existence of God and that He alone is the one self-existing Being are today, as in the Middle Ages, the most valid proof and clear confirmation of the dogma of the Church, proclaimed in the Vatican Council and excellently interpreted by Pius X in these words: "God, as the Beginning and End of all things, can make Himself known, and demonstrate Himself with certainty by the natural light of reason through material means or through the visible works of creation, since from the effects the cause can be ascertained."

In Metaphysics, not occasionally but continually and bitterly, he met with opposition, yet he still retained his force and all his splendor, even now preserved in all its integrity. Rightly, therefore, the same Predecessor has said: "To separate oneself from Aquinas, especially in metaphysics, one must suffer great loss."

A GREAT THEOLOGIAN

Most noble of all human studies is certainly Philosophy. But, according to the actual order of Divine

Providence, we are not able with truth to call it the first, because by no means does it embrace the entire mass of things. For, in the beginning of the *Summa Against the Gentiles*, St. Thomas demonstrated the existence of another order of things, superior to nature and excelling the virtue of reason, and this order man would never have known had not the Divine Bounty revealed it to him.

This is the region where faith dominates, and this science of faith is called Theology, and is more perfect inasmuch as it has a more profound acknowledgment of the documents of faith and at the same time a higher and fuller faculty of philosophizing. Now one cannot doubt but that Theology reached its highest summit in Aquinas, since he possessed perfectly the Divine precepts of the faith, where absolute knowledge of Divine things and strength of intelligence wrought wonderfully for philosophy. Therefore, St. Thomas is the principal master in our schools not only for his philosophy but also for his studies in Theology. For there is no department of Theology in which he has not most happily shown the extraordinary richness of his genius.

ESTABLISHED APOLOGETICS

First of all, he established Apologetics on their proper and true foundations, defining well the distinction that exists between the things of reason and those of faith, between the natural and the supernatural order. Therefore the inviolable Vatican Council, when it defined that certain things can be known naturally concerning religion, but that to know all, and this without error, one needs by moral necessity that they should be revealed, and that in order to understand them the Divine Revelation was absolutely necessary, made use of no other arguments than those borrowed from Thomas who desired that whosoever took up the defense of Christian doctrine, should hold firmly to this principle: "It is not light-mindedness to assent to the things of faith, even though they are above reason."

He moreover showed that, although the things of

faith are hidden and obscure, the reasons which lead men to faith are clear and manifest, since man "would not believe if he did not understand that these things are to be believed." And he even adds that faith, far from being an impediment and a servile yoke, is rather to be esteemed as a very great benefit since it is a "beginning of Eternal Life in us."

The other part of Theology which regards the interpretation of dogma is treated by St. Thomas with special richness, nor has anyone ever penetrated therein more deeply or more accurately exposed the most august mysteries of faith, as those which belong to the intimate Life of God, to the secret of eternal predestination, to the supernatural government of the world, to the faculty of attaining their end conceded to reasonable creatures, to the Redemption of the human race wrought by Jesus Christ and continued by the Church and through the Sacraments, two means which are called by the Angelic Doctor "certain relics of the Divine Incarnation."

A MORALIST

He established, besides, a secure doctrine of moral theology for the complete direction of human acts to a supernatural end. And he assigns not alone to individual men, but even to civil and domestic society, by his perfect theology, certain rules and precepts of living in which consists all moral, political and economic science.

Hence, in the second part of the *Summa Theologica* those teachings are famous which regard the paternal or domestic rule, the legal rule of state or nation, the law of peoples, peace, war, justice and dominion, laws and their observance, the duty of providing for private necessity as for public prosperity, and all this as well in the natural as in the supernatural order. Because, if privately and publicly and in the mutual relations of nation with nation, these precepts are preserved holily and inviolately, nothing else is required for that conciliating "Peace of Christ in the Reign of Christ" which the whole world so much desires.

It is, therefore, to be hoped that the doctrines of Aquinas concerning the ruling of peoples and the laws which establish their relations with one another may be better known, since they contain the true foundations of that which is termed the "League of Nations." Nor was the ascetical and mystical doctrine of Thomas of less worth because, having reduced the whole moral economy to the dominion of virtue and talents, he established this doctrine according to the diverse classes of men as well for those who desire to live in common manner, as for those who cherish the proposition of following Christian Perfection and these in a kind of double life, the active and the contemplative.

He who desires to know how far the precept of the love of God extends, should principally consult the Angelic Doctor in order to discover how far it increases in us charity and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and what is its nature as practised in the various states of life, in the religious, in the apostolate, or other points of mystical theology. And this because, holding to the truth that the Scripture in its entirety and single parts, is truly the word of God, he exacted the interpretation according to the same norm as Our Predecessors, Leo XIII in the Encyclical *Providentissimus*, and Benedict XV in his *Spiritus Paraclitus*, and afterward by the doctrine that the Holy Spirit is the principal Author of Holy Scripture, while man is no more than an instrumental author. He would not permit any doubt of the absolute historical authority of the Bible, but on the foundation of the literal text he established the spiritual sense which he was accustomed to unfold with the utmost precision, allegorically, tropologically and anagogically.

POET OF THE EUCHARIST

Finally, our Saint had the gift and singular privilege of being able to interpret the teachings of his science in the prayers and hymns of the liturgy, and to become the poet and herald of the Eucharist. For the Catholic Church in every part of the world and among all peoples in the sacred rites preserves and will always preserve with all zeal the canticles of St.

Thomas by which the highest fervor is inspired in the supplicating soul and which contain the more exact expression of the traditional doctrine concerning the Most August Sacrament, which is termed the Mystery of Faith, than which nothing is more perfect.

Revolving this fact and recalling the eulogy already cited and made to Thomas by Christ Himself, no one will marvel that the title Eucharistic Doctor has been given to him. And now, of those things which We have commemorated up to this point We gather consequences most opportune for practise.

ST. THOMAS MODEL FOR YOUTH

It follows particularly that youth should take St. Thomas for their model and strive to imitate and to follow with all diligence the great virtues which shine forth in him, above all humility which is the foundation of the spiritual life, and chastity.

Let them learn from this man of the highest genius and doctrine to restrain every movement of pride of soul, as well as to humbly implore an abundance of Divine light on their studies. Let them learn from such a Teacher to flee nothing so vigilantly as the allurements of the senses in order that afterward they may not contemplate wisdom with an eye darkened.

This man taught by example in his life and confirmed his doctrine in his teaching: "If anyone abstains from bodily pleasures in order more freely to attain to the contemplation of truth, this pertains to the rectitude of reason." Wherefore are we admonished by Holy Scriptures: "Wisdom shall not enter into the evil soul nor shall it dwell in a body subject to sin." Therefore, if the chastity of Thomas in the supreme perils to which it was exposed, had been overcome, the Church would not have had her Angelic Doctor.

PONTIFICAL DIRECTIONS

Seeing a great number of the youth deceived by the allurements of pleasure and giving themselves up to the delights of the senses, We, Venerable Brethren, with all concern recommend to you to propagate everywhere and particularly among clerical students, the association of the Angelic Warfare founded for

the conservation and custody of chastity under the protection of St. Thomas, and We confirm all the Pontifical Indulgences enriched by Benedict XIII and by Our other Predecessors.

And in order that all may be more readily disposed to enroll their names in this Warfare, We grant to those who join it authority to wear in place of the cincture a sacred medal about the neck, bearing on one side the image of St. Thomas girded by angels and on the other that of the Virgin Queen of the Most Holy Rosary.

Since St. Thomas has been established as the Patron of all Catholic schools, since he wonderfully united in himself a double wisdom, that which is acquired by reason and that which is infused by God, and in resolving the most difficult questions, united fasting to prayer, and retained the image of Jesus Christ as his principal book, the youth consecrated to God may learn from him how they ought to comport themselves in studies in order to reap the greater fruit.

The members of religious families see as in a mirror the life of Thomas who rejected dignities of every kind, even the highest, in order to live in the exercise of perfect obedience and to die in the sanctity of his profession. Finally, all faithful Christians have in Thomas an example of the most tender devotion toward the August Queen of Heaven whose Angelical Salutation he frequently recited and whose sweet name he inscribed on his pages.

Let them ask from the Eucharistic Doctor fervor toward the Most August Sacrament. And above all, as is fitting, let priests seek this end. "Every day," says the most diligent of his biographers, "unless hindered by infirmities, he celebrated Mass and afterward heard another of one of his companions and even served it." But who can express the sacred fervor of his soul, or with what diligence he prepared for Mass, or having terminated it, what thanksgiving he rendered to the Divine Majesty?

ST. THOMAS' DOCTRINE ANTIDOTE FOR WORLD

In order to avoid the errors, principally religious, which are the fountainhead of the miseries of our age,

it is necessary today even more than in other times, to remain faithful to the doctrines of St. Thomas, who refutes the various opinions and theories of modernists most victoriously, especially their philosophical errors, who defends, as We have seen, the value and force of human intelligence and proves by the most solid arguments the existence of God, who in dogma distinguishes the natural from the supernatural and illustrates the reasons for believing, and in theology shows that the things accepted on faith do not lean on opinions, but on truth and are immutable, in Biblical science giving the true concept of the Divine inspiration; in discipline of manners, in social affairs, in laws, placing the principles of justice whether commutative or distributive, in prescribing the ascetic teachings on perfection in the Christian life and in opposing those who in his day reviled the religious Orders. And, in contrast to that emancipation from God which vaunts itself today, he affirmed the rights of the First Truth and the authority which God, the Supreme Lord, has over us. From all this it appears that the Modernists fear no other Doctor of the Church as St. Thomas Aquinas.

"GO TO THOMAS"

Wherefore, as once it was said to the Egyptians in their extreme need of provision, "Go to Joseph," because from him they could obtain the grain in abundance which should nourish their bodies, so now We say to all those seeking for Truth: "Go to Thomas," in order that from him they may seek the nutriment of their souls for everlasting Life.

That such food may be at hand and within the reach of all was attested on oath when, concerning St. Thomas' enrollment in the catalogue of Saints, it was said: "In the luminous and open school of this Doctor very many religious and seculars flourished through his succinct, facile and clear method, and even the laity and men of little intelligence desired to have his writings."

Now it is Our desire that all the things established principally by Leo XIII and by Pius X and ordered by Us during the past year, may be attentively and

inviolably observed, especially by those who in schools of the clergy are teaching superior subjects. Let them be persuaded that they amply satisfy their duty and fulfil Our desires if they shall commence to love the Angelic Doctor and to make themselves familiar with his writings, if they shall communicate to the students under their guidance that ardent love, and make themselves interpreters of his thought and render them capable of exciting in others equal transports.

Among the lovers of St. Thomas should be all those who are children of the Church, who are engaged in the highest studies, and We certainly desire that among them, within the limits of a just liberty, there may arise that noble emulation which causes good studies to progress, although avoiding that asperity which does not help toward the truth and which serves only to relax the bonds of charity.

Let that, therefore, which is prescribed in the Code of Canon Law, be inviolably observed by all: "The studies of rational philosophy and of theology, and the instruction of students in such disciplines shall be absolutely treated by the professors according to the method, the doctrine and the principles of the Angelic Doctor, and these shall be religiously maintained."

To this end all shall conduct themselves, so that they may truly be able to call St. Thomas their Teacher. But let none exact from others more than the Church, mother of all, exacts from all her children. Nor is anyone forbidden, in those matters wherein approved Catholic doctors are wont to be divided to take a view that seems to him more probable.

CELEBRATION OF CENTENARY

Since the entire Christian universe is interested that this centenary be worthily observed, and since, in honoring St. Thomas, they deal not only with his glories but with the teaching authority of the Church, it is Our desire that from the 18th day of July to the end of the next year, the celebration may continue, and especially wherever the young clerics are established, not only among the Friars Preachers which Order, as says Benedict XV, "deserves praise no less for having given us the Angelic Doctor than for never

having abandoned one point of his doctrine," but even in the other religious families and in all the ecclesiastical colleges, and that, in celebrating these solemn festivities, this sacred city where Aquinas was for a time Master of the Sacred Palace, shall be first, and that the Pontifical Angelical College, where one may say Thomas dwells as in his own house, may be first in manifesting its holy joy, and that in the same joy the other ecclesiastical colleges of Rome shall exceed all other houses of study.

And We, to add to the splendor and the fruits of this solemnity, by Our authority, accord: 1. That in all the churches of Preachers and other churches and chapels where the public are permitted to enter, especially in seminaries, colleges and educational houses, there be celebrated a triduum, octave or novena in which the same indulgences may be gained which are conceded on similar functions in honor of Saints or Beati:

2. In all the churches of the Brothers and Sisters of the Dominican Order, once during the days on which such functions are held, the faithful may, having confessed and communicated, gain the Plenary Indulgence as many times as they pray before the altar of St. Thomas:

3. That in the aforesaid Dominican churches the priests and tertiaries of the Order may, every Wednesday or on the first free day of the week, celebrate Mass in honor of St. Thomas, as on the Feast, reciting or omitting the Gloria and Credo according to the rite of the day, and We concede to those who celebrate this Mass as to those who hear it, a Plenary Indulgence on the usual conditions.

SOLEMN DISPUTATIONS

And moreover, in sacred seminaries and other ecclesiastical institutes, We desire that solemn philosophical disputations be held during this time upon grave studies in honor of the Angelic Doctor. And to give due solemnity to the Feast of St. Thomas, the Patron of all Catholic Schools, We desire that on that day there may be a holiday from lessons and that not only shall Solemn Mass be celebrated, but

We desire that even in seminaries and religious families there may be disputations held according to the manner which We have indicated.

Finally, since under the guidance of the Angelic Doctor the studies of our students always bear greater fruits to the glory of God and the advantage of the Church, We join to this Letter, with the recommendation to spread the same, the formula of prayer used by him. To those who devoutly recite it, We concede, every time they shall do so, an Indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines.

As a warrant of celestial gifts and a pledge of Our benevolence, We impart to you, Venerable Brethren, to the clergy and people confided to your care, the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, St. Peter's, June 19, 1923, the second year of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. XI.

"One School, One Law, One Flag"

ANNA DILL GAMBLE,

President of Catholic Women's Club, York, Pa.

A dishonest and anonymous form of advertising has recently been started in York that is intended to throw discredit upon the private school system of education. The legend, in the form of a sticker, "One school, one law, one flag," has been appearing on the windows of street cars and stores, etc. In most cases these stickers are removed by the owners of the property as soon as they appear.

I have said that this advertising is dishonest, first because it expresses a lie, and second because it uses other people's property for advertising purposes without paying for it. It is a lie because it implies that to send one's children to a private school is unpatriotic—that the true American should be loyal not only to one flag, but to one school and "one law," whatever that may mean. As we have both a Federal and a State law, the subtlety of the "one law" slogan is completely lost on me.

However, the general drift of the catch words is

clear. They convey the idea that the American citizen should be standardized under one flag. Who these new Americans are who believe in the standardization of our citizenry according to certain formulae that have come into fashion since the World War, I am not pretending to guess. They themselves are careful to conceal their identity. But that they know little of the history of their own country or of its institutions is entirely manifest. It is no derogation to the public school system to call attention to the fact that it did not always exist as part of our country's system of education. It was intended to supplement and not to supersede the private schools. In this connection I can do no better than to quote from a statement issued by the Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia, to counteract this very sort of propaganda:

CONCLUSIVE FACTS

"There is no trace of the public school in our American foundations. It is not mentioned in our national Constitution. It was not mentioned in any of the constitutions of the original States. It did not exist in the Colonies. It did not exist in the States for more than fifty years after the formation of the Union. Not one who signed our Declaration of Independence or who fought in our American Revolution or who helped to frame our American Constitution ever saw a public school. The United States had been going for a century before we had a President who was educated in the public school; and almost that long before we had a senator, a congressman, a State legislator, a governor or a judge, who was educated in the public school."

I do not believe, therefore, that I am one whit less a patriotic American because I was educated at the York Collegiate Institute than my neighbor who was educated in the public school. Many of the most valued citizens of York, both Catholic and Protestant, not to mention their grandfathers and their grandmothers, were educated in private schools.

The persons who utter these slogans are themselves

ill-instructed. They know nothing of the history of education either in this country or abroad. They have picked up phrases and pass them along glibly and mechanically, without understanding what they are talking about. Many of these phrases are made by people who did not love our institutions, but who are trying to sway public opinion through the clever use of catch words.

"One school, one law, one flag," sounds more Prussian than American. But even in Germany, so long ago as Bismarck's time, the effort to clamp the religion and education of the people into one iron system failed because the people were too intelligent. In Russia, where the people are ignorant, it has succeeded. Nevertheless, these anonymous educational drill sergeants (who evidently belong to that numerous class of persons who believe that "history is bunk") would like to start a "kulturkampf" in America. But as the American people are at least as intelligent as the German people, these one-school, one-law, one-flag folk will end in the Bismarckian fiasco known to history as "going to Canossa."

AMERICAN IDEALS

The ideal of real Americanism is variety in unity. It is the ideal of a democracy, not the ideal of a dull militaristic uniformity—the kaiser's system or that of the "socialist State." Trotsky has recently stated in *Izvestia* the Soviet organ, that when America has completely centralized and bureaucratized itself, then according to the laws of social evolution, our Republic will drop, a ripe plum, to the "dictatorship of the proletariat," ready to receive it; and he definitely lays his finger upon the principal obstacle to the fulfilling of Soviet dreams in our country, namely, our system of sovereign States in Union, whereby through the uncontrolled and incalculable variety of our American democracy, we are able to preserve our liberties.

When we as a people cease to value liberty of teaching and religious freedom, and really begin seriously to adopt the "one-school, one-law, one-flag, one-idea" of these insane zealots, then we can expect to go the way of all despotisms—to chaos and extinction.